

TIVERTON CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Regular meeting minutes: May 3, 2008

1. Call to order

Chair Cecil Leonard called the meeting to order at 11:10 am at the Tiverton Town Hall

Members present: Laura Epke, Deb Pallasch, Ray Medeiros, Diane Harris, Bob Koohy, Frank Marshall (12:00PM) Absent: Richard Joslin, Stanley Zeramby

2. Approval of minutes

None

3. Commission discussion:

C. Leonard referenced and read portions of email from R. Joslin for the record. See attached.

Discussion of section 310, #2 on working doc. No action taken.

Noted that Commission's term is up on July 11, 2008 and ballot questions need to be delivered to the Secretary of State by August 6, 2008.

Discussion of FTM alternative (docket and CPI). No action taken.

4. Other

None.

5. Adjournment

The Commission's May 3, 2008 regular meeting was adjourned at 12:59 pm.

Minutes recorded and compiled by Deborah Pallasch, Secretary.

ATTACHMENT

[reminder: do not reply to this message]

Please enter this into the Committee record and/or read on Saturday AM 5/3/2008.

Dear Colleagues:

Good luck on your writing.

I agree with Frank that it is unfortunate that we do not have an FTM alternative that a vast majority of our committee is super-enthusiastic about. I think such unanimity is not to be expected with our diverse group.

I do think it is past due that a good FTM alternative be presented to the voters. I am convinced that the FTM is an unworkable anachronism. I think it no longer protects the average citizen from bad budgets. I think it creates an illusion of protection and control. I think it is structured poorly for a large & growing town. I would not want to see a lower quorum. As many have said, very little can be changed in the current FTM by line-by-line voting.

Personally, I do respect the current 21 (or 23) elected officials and would trust them to make a budget, after many public meetings and hearings and the help of an appointed Town Administrator (who should be paid more & be required to have more experience.). I think the elected officials should all have 2 year terms.

But I also think we can be congratulated for our current FTM alternative. It may not be my first choice, but it is the best choice we could come up with. Again, having two choices on the ADR is not just sensible and more democratic, but it is the LEGAL way to do it, according to Andy.

I agree with Diane and Cecil that now we should finish writing it as best we can, and allow the people to choose in November. I am happy to give the people a choice. I am hoping that all of the committee members will be able to help write the FTM replacement question, not just the 5 who voted for it.

I also agree with Frank that some voters are hoping the FTM will be retained. I have been asking every Tiverton voter I meet about the FTM—not just since September, but since I first attended an FTM (1997). It is clear to me that since 1997, the number of voters wanting the FTM to continue has sharply declined. Since September only a dozen voters have expressed a desire to me to retain the FTM. Most of these voters, I sense, do not understand how little impact an FTM actually has on the budget.

I think the function of an FTM that people want is that of a forum to stand up and question individual budget lines or overall budget strategy, and thus property tax rates. I believe that

this function can be exercised at public hearings during the budget cycle. At an FTM it is really too late anyway.

Also, I believe our Commission has crafted 10 or so excellent other questions which we can put forth. So I say let's go ahead with all of our questions--- including the ADR to replace the FTM--- and see what the voters say in November.

I'll see you all on May 14th.

Thank you.

Richard Joslin, Charter Review Committee